

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: William Cook, 64, businessman

"I was the first one in my family to join [the Outrigger Canoe Club]. Cost five bucks. It was hard to get five bucks in 1934. (Laughs) I sold a lot of coconuts, mangos and breadfruit."

Cook, Caucasian, was born in Honolulu on December 23, 1922. His parents, George and Inez Cook, were restaurant owners. They lived in Kaimukī until 1927 when they moved to Kūhiō Avenue in Waikīkī.

Cook attended Lincoln School and then graduated from Roosevelt High School.

In 1932 the Cooks moved into Prince Kūhiō's former beach house on Kalākaua Avenue where they opened a restaurant called Cook's Place. They lived there for three years. After his father died, Cook, along with his mother and older brother, settled on Lewers Road where they lived for the next eighteen years.

As a youth, Cook spent most of his free time on the beach, surfing, swimming and paddling canoe. At twelve years old he joined the Outrigger Canoe Club and has been an active member since. He ran their beach services in 1963-64.

Cook started a used-car business in 1946 which he managed successfully until 1962. He now owns a taxi service, started in 1968, of which he is also a driver. Just about every afternoon he can be found at the Outrigger Canoe Club.

Tape No. 13-100-1-86

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

William Cook (WC)

June 19, 1986

Waikīkī, O'ahu

BY: 'Iwalani Hodges (IH)

IH: This is an interview with William Cook at the Outrigger Canoe Club in Waikīkī, O'ahu on June 19, 1986. The interviewer is 'Iwalani Hodges.

Okay. Let's start out with where and when you were born.

WC: Let's see, I was born in 1922 in Hawai'i.

IH: And where were you living at the time?

WC: We were living in Kaimukī, right next to the fire station, about 12th Avenue or. . . What's the next one up from 12th?

IH: Koko Head?

WC: Koko Head, yeah. Koko Head and Harding [Avenues], I guess, near Kaimukī Avenue.

IH: How long did you live there?

WC: I have no idea. (Laughs) They left there when I was very small.

IH: You don't remember the place?

WC: No, I don't remember ever living there. I think we moved away in about '25, 1925 or '[2]6.

IH: Okay. And where did you move to?

WC: We moved to Kūhiō Avenue.

IH: Do you know why your parents moved at the time? Why they moved to Waikīkī?

WC: No, I have no idea. They never consulted me. (Laughs)

IH: Okay. Exactly where on Kūhiō did you move to?

WC: When we moved we were right off of Lili'uokalani Avenue, Lili'uokalani, about two houses from the corner, from the ma uka corner.

IH: Is that going Diamond Head?

WC: No, going 'Ewa.

IH: Okay. So, from Lili'uokalani, you lived on Kūhiō?

WC: On Kūhiō.

IH: Two houses from the corner.

WC: About two houses from the corner, yeah, on the ma uka side, towards 'Ewa. Ma uka 'Ewa.

IH: Do you remember that house?

WC: Yeah. Yeah, I remember it was a big old house. We had a house on the back that my father rented to Russell Starr who later became president of Castle & Cooke, I think. Either Castle & Cooke or A&B [Alexander & Baldwin].

IH: Did he own that property?

WC: No, he rented it.

IH: He rented it from Russell Starr?

WC: No. I don't know who he rented it from. I was only five years old, then.

IH: Oh, the back house was rented to Russell Starr?

WC: Yeah, he rented the whole thing, and then the little back garage house, he rented to Russell Starr.

IH: Oh, I see. Okay. You said it was a big house. Was it a single-story or a two-story?

WC: Single-story, but it was big.

IH: How many rooms?

WC: Three, four bedrooms. A big place. All the homes in Waikīkī were big in those days because most of them had big families. Most of them had big lanais running around them, you know.

IH: Did your house have a lanai?

WC: Yeah. It was screened in, but it wasn't like the Peterson's place. The Petersons had a big, open lanai, I think.

- IH: But yours was screened in?
- WC: Screened in, yeah.
- IH: Did it go all the way around the house?
- WC: Yeah. It went all the way around.
- IH: Oh, how nice. What kind of shrubbery did you have in the yard?
- WC: Oh, lot of stuff. Ti leaves, crotons. They had a big monkeypod tree in the front yard that practically covered the house, as I remember it.
- IH: Were there any fruit trees?
- WC: No, no fruit trees. The fruit trees were over in Sammy Amalu's yard. He had some mango. And I guess we had a papaya tree 'cause my mom always had papayas. We always planted 'em. We only lived there till about '28, I guess. [Nineteen] twenty-eight, we moved to Lanikai. We lived in Lanikai for about a year. That's the year my father bought the Shag's Cafe in Sea View Inn in Hale'iwa.
- IH: Oh, your father was in restaurant business?
- WC: Yeah, food restaurants. We stayed in Lanikai for about a year, I guess. I can remember going over the Pali. My father had a 1926 convertible Dodge. We'd go over the Pali, and everybody'd hang onto the roof as we'd (laughs) go over so the roof didn't blow off. But that got to be a hassle in going back and forth 'cause he was in the restaurant business then and he was also working for the [Honolulu] Advertiser at the same time. Display advertising manager. And then, let's see, we moved into Kalākaua Avenue, up by the old Chinese vegetable garden.
- IH: Which was where?
- WC: It ran from Kalākaua Avenue through to Ala Moana. It included all the Ala Moana Shopping Center.
- IH: Oh, the vegetable garden?
- WC: The big vegetable garden, yeah. It was a big Chinese vegetable garden where they grew rice, they grew taro, they grew everything. And it went from Kalākaua Avenue to Ala Moana, if you could imagine . . .
- IH: Do you know the name of that farm?
- WC: No, I don't. It was just the Chinese vegetable garden. I guess we called it a garden. That's where Holiday Mart is. Went all through that area. Our place was right next to Stanley's Auto Paint Shop, where it is now, where there's an empty lot. That's

where my father had his first restaurant. Was in there.

IH: What was the name of the restaurant?

WC: Cook's Place. Was always Cook's Place. (Laughs) Then he had one Downtown, the Green Mill Grill, originally. And then he had Shag's Cafe in Sea View Inn in Hale'iwa. The Downtown one, he lost. He gave it to a sergeant to run for him and the guy stole a lot of money from him. That's why, he just closed it up.

IH: So the one on Kalākaua [Avenue], Cook's Place on Kalākaua, how long was that there?

WC: Oh, we were there till, gosh, about '32, I think. Around '32. And then, my father got the lease on the Queen Lili'uokalani's home in Waikīkī, and they moved the restaurant down to there.

IH: That's Prince Kūhiō's beach house?

WC: Yeah. It was Queen Lili'uokalani's beach home originally, and her [nephew] was Prince Kūhiō. That's the one, Lili'uokalani Avenue ran right into the front door. When I tell people that, they go and they stand on Lili'uokalani Avenue and look out, and they see the ocean, you know. (Chuckles) They can't believe there was a home there. But it was a beautiful home. Was a two-story home. It was, oh, actually, I don't know how many square feet. It was tremendous. Had a two-story aviary inside the house, bird.

IH: In the house?

WC: In the house, yeah. It was right inside. And then, had a stream that ran through it. Little kind of a waterfall. Fresh water ran out. There was no beach. It was a wall in front. And big glass windows that went up, oh, gosh, the windows were like this, the size of this. (WC referring to glass cases in the room.) Those are about six feet wide and about ten feet high. But there were two windows. One, then they went up into the other one. It was stained glass like a church. Beautiful place. And the rock wall in the front where the waves hit. Cannons on the side of the house facing the ocean. There were two cannons. And a pier house out on the water, just like the Moana's old pier house.

IH: That pier house was still there when you had your place there?

WC: Oh, yeah. Yeah. They tore it down in 1935 [1936] when they tore the place down. And then, there was an upstairs that we lived in, and downstairs was all dining room, and office, and private dining rooms. There was one tapa room that was completely walled with tapa, even the ceiling. It was really a beautiful place.

IH: Did your father do that or was it like that?

WC: No, it was all done. The home was like that when we got it, when

we leased it. It belonged to the territory at the time. Then they decided to build Kūhiō Beach. So they cancelled the lease. They wouldn't extend the lease after 1935 when they kicked us out.

IH: What was the yard like around the house?

WC: There wasn't too much yard. There were guests' quarters and servants' quarters on one, the Diamond Head side. And then, on the other side was the aviary and the. . . . There was a big tree in there, a banyan tree. It's still there. The banyan tree is still there. That was in our yard, too. The Kanakanuis were our neighbors. I checked. They were. Bill Kanakanui was our neighbor. I think that tree was also in his yard. It kind of split the yards up.

IH: Do you remember the Kanakanuis?

WC: Yeah, I remember Bill Kanakanui.

IH: How many were in that family?

WC: I don't remember how many, but I remember the one boy, the young boy. He used to surf with us, my brother and I. We used to keep our surfboards in the beach house out there. I mean, in the pier house out on the water. My brother and I, we'd go surfing off of the beach, off of the (pier). Queen's Surf. (Chuckles)

IH: You know, if we can go back to Kūhiō [Avenue], when you lived on Kūhiō, do you remember any of the neighbors that were living there at the time you lived there?

WC: Charley Amalu and Sammy Amalu.

IH: Where exactly did they live?

WC: They lived on the corner of Lili'uokalani and Kūhiō [Avenues]. They lived on the ma kai 'Ewa side of Lili'uokalani. That was the Amalu property. Belonged to Charley Amalu. I don't know how long they stayed there, but I know they were there when we left. I knew Sammy quite well. (Chuckles)

IH: Yeah?

WC: I had an operation, a hernia operation, and he was always the nurse. He was always there helping my mother with me. (Chuckles)

IH: Who else do you remember in the neighborhood?

WC: I don't know. There were so many people around there. The Petersons, I knew them. The judge, Steiner. The Steiner family.

IH: They lived in that neighborhood?

WC: They lived around there, yeah. Well, they lived on the beach.

IH: The beach house . . .

WC: You know, one block away. We were only one block off of the beach at that time. Two blocks, I guess. The Crosses. The Crosses lived over there. Billy Cross. Jack Cross. They owned the whole block over in there where they built Burger King [Restaurant]. You know, the King's Alley? That was the Cross property, part of it was.

IH: Were there many empty lots right there on Kūhiō [Avenue] when you lived there? Or was it all houses already?

WC: It was mostly houses. There were some empty lots, but I don't remember too many. There weren't very many. When you get up further, up by McCully, then the whole area from McCully up to King Street, on the right side [i.e., Diamond Head side] almost all of it was jungles at that time up till about 1930. They even had a murder in there in the corner of McCully [Street] and Kalākaua [Avenue]. That was all jungle. Fukunaga. He abducted the Jamieson boy, Judge Jamieson's [i.e., Frederick Jamieson, vice-president of Hawaiian Trust Company] son, and killed him in there. A guy named Fukunaga. I remember that well. That was in about '29 or '30 [i.e., 1928], somewhere around there.

IH: That was big news in Waikīkī?

WC: Oh, yeah. Yeah, that was a big one. One of the big ones.

IH: Okay. Do you remember what kinds of things you folks used to do in Waikīkī besides beach activities? I know all the kids used to hang around the beach, but was there any other kinds of things you used to do?

WC: There were a lot of wrestlers that lived there when we were kids. They used to hang around the beach all the time, you know, in their off time. We always had one kid that would try to wrestle them, Terry Carroll. He was a (chuckles) well-built young guy, but he always trying to wrestle, see if they could put him down. They had a tough time putting him down, even though they were wrestlers. But the old Hawaiian guys. One guy named Manu used to sit at Queen's Beach and play the steel guitar. You know, not electric, it was a hand--regular steel guitar, no electricity. We had some good times, lot of the old-timers.

IH: Did you folks ever play barefoot football or anything like that?

WC: Yeah, we played next to Gump's.

IH: Where was Gump's?

WC: Gump's was on Kalākaua [Avenue] and Lewers [Street]. We played.

There was an empty lot there where Woolworths is now. Half of that lot was empty. Two-thirds of it was empty. And we played a lot of football in there. Touch football. McDiarmid, and myself, Jim Turner, whole bunch of guys. (Chuckles) You've heard of Don McDiarmid? Hula Records. Jim Turner is president of Love's Bakery, one of my classmates, Roosevelt [High School]. (Chuckles)

IH: Did he live in Waikīkī also?

WC: Yeah. Yeah, he lived on. . . . What's the one that runs down by the fort?

IH: Kālia?

WC: No, the street that runs down.

IH: Saratoga?

WC: Saratoga. Jim Turner lived on Saratoga [Road]. Don McDiarmid lived on Beach Walk. And I lived on Lewers [Road]. This was later. This was in the '30s, late '30s.

IH: That's after you folks had the Cook's Place?

WC: Yeah. My father died in 1935 and my mother sold all the restaurants, the four restaurants, and raised her two sons on what was left over.

IH: So you folks moved to Lewers, then, after that?

WC: Then we moved to Lewers where the Betty Lei Hula Studio was. There was kind of a little court there, two-story houses. They were kind of attached. I think there were four or five places on this side, and then there were three cottages on the other side. And [Dorothy] Kaholo Campbell had her studio in there. She taught hula in there.

IH: So that was in the same building that you were living in?

WC: No. She was across the (court). She was in one of the houses. We were in a big building type. There were four units in one big building. They were upstairs and downstairs, two bedrooms. We lived in there for--gosh, my mom stayed there nineteen years. During the war, too. All during the war. It was on the Royal Hawaiian [Hotel] property. That's where they built the Reef Tower Hotels. There're Reef Towers on that property, where Al Harrington has his show, that property.

IH: So the place you stayed in was like an apartment?

WC: Yeah. Yeah, they were big. They were two-story apartments, but they were all together. They were just separated by a wall. They were all in one building. Their own entrances . . .

IH: Was Lewers [Road] mostly of that apartment-type of buildings?

WC: There were a lot of them, yeah. Lot of them, but nothing over two stories. Two or three. Three stories at the most. Two stories was a high-rise in those days. (Chuckles)

IH: So you said Betty Lei Hula Studio was across the court from you?

WC: Across, yeah. We had a driveway that went into the garages in the back. And right across. They were right in the same property with us. It was all owned by the same people. I forget who owned it.

IH: How long did she have her studio there?

WC: Oh, gosh. Probably forty years. Thirty, forty years. She's no longer with us. She was one of the great ones. My ex-wife taught hula for her and so did May Freeth--May Borthwick. She married a Borthwick. She was a great singer and dancer. And back of us lived Billy Mowat. He now drives the pilot tug in Honolulu Harbor. He was a cop then. (Chuckles) Old-time family, the Mowat family. I think his father started Rawleys, Rawley's frozen foods. Bill Mowat, Sr.

IH: And then, you said who lived on (Kālia Road) now?

WC: (Jessie Mathias.) George Tibbetts. Duke Kahanamoku's sister, I think, lived down there. The Paoa family, part of 'em. Yeah, Duke's sister, and I think David had some property down there, David Kahanamoku. There was one piece there and then there was another piece on Kālia [Road], way down by [Hilton] Hawaiian Village. There were two pieces . . .

IH: So was that area right there between Lewers [Road] and Saratoga [Road], would you say that was single-family dwellings in there at the time?

WC: Most of them were little courts. People owned them, like running towards the beach, there was one area from Kālia [Road] where the Reef Hotel is now, that was a court. And a street ran down the middle, and there was a little circular fountain. The driveway went right around, so you go down and turn around. There must have been, oh, probably sixteen units in there. Most of them were double. You rent the downstairs or the upstairs. They rented them to the tourists. You know, in those days, we were getting people coming in on the boats. We were getting about 700 tourists a week, I guess. Now, we get 11,000 a day. (Chuckles) It's quite a difference.

IH: Did you have much dealings with the tourists in those days when you were living there?

WC: No, the only time we had much connection with them was when we met 'em on the beach and took 'em surfing or something if they were

pretty young girls, whatever. Of course, we were young, too. (Chuckles) Took 'em canoeing. I ran the beach for a while. I got to know a lot of 'em that way. That was fun.

IH: Okay. Can you tell me what schools you attended? What elementary school you attended?

WC: Yeah, I went to Lincoln.

IH: Lincoln Elementary. Okay, that time . . .

WC: See, in those days, Lincoln went from one to sixth [grades], and Roosevelt went from seventh to twelfth.

IH: Oh, so you only went to two schools then?

WC: So, I only went to two schools, yeah. I went to one preschool. I don't remember what it was, too. I was left-handed and I wrote backwards with my left hand. I wrote upside down. So they had to hold it up to a mirror to read it, so they switched me to right hand. I started that when I was four and a half, and then I went to school when I was five and a half to Lincoln.

IH: So, at that time, weren't you living in Waikīkī?

WC: Yeah. We were living on Kūhiō [Avenue] when I started.

IH: Yeah, so why didn't you go to Waikīkī School?

WC: Well, mainly because there weren't any schools in Waikīkī.

IH: Didn't they have Waikīkī Elementary at that time?

WC: You mean the one on Kapahulu and. . . . I don't think so.

IH: It used to be down where Jefferson School is now. There used to be a Waikīkī School down there.

WC: No, I never went to that. I think we had a choice of what school we could go to. My mother put me in Lincoln. That's where most of the Haoles went.

IH: Oh.

(Laughter)

WC: I think. (Laughs) Then, from there it was almost automatic. You went to Roosevelt because it was English-standard then. It was different than now. Now, you go to your district [school]. And then, in later years, they knocked off seventh and eighth. I think seventh and eighth grades or seventh, eighth, and ninth. And Roosevelt was just tenth, eleventh and twelfth. Then you went to Robert Louis Stevenson [Intermediate School]. But I was never

involved in that.

IH: So they didn't have Stevenson School at the time?

WC: No. Well, they had. . . . No, I guess they didn't. They started that when they knocked [a few grades] off Roosevelt.

IH: So, how did you get from Waikīkī up to. . . .

WC: To Lincoln?

IH: To Lincoln. It's quite a distance.

WC: Oh, my dad would take us in the car, usually. My brother was two years ahead of me. He'd take us and drop us off. Then we could catch the trolley back. There was a trolley you could ride for five cents. You know, you hang on the side. If you didn't have five cents you jump off when the conductor (chuckles) came and catch the next one. You jump on that one. (Chuckles) We did a lot of that. But the trolley came through down King Street, and then turned right on McCully [Street], and turned, you know, went into Kalākaua Avenue, and then turned left, went across the bridge. In those days the McCully bridge was open. You know, you could see right through it. It just had twelve by twelves [boards] going across it. If you wanted to walk across the bridge, well, there was a walkway across that, I guess, on one side. But the trolleys used to pass on the bridge. You know, they could pass in two ways. Double tracks in those days.

IH: So the bridge was only tracks?

WC: Yeah, it was all tracks except for one walking area. You couldn't drive on it. In those days, you couldn't drive on McCully bridge. As I remember, just the trolleys went across it. If you want to go, then you went over to the other [bridge], the one on Kalākaua [Avenue], and went across the bridge. As I remember it. I could be wrong. I'm not always right, but I'm never wrong.

(Laughter)

WC: No, you could verify that with somebody, I'm sure. I don't know who, but. As I remember it, you know, you'd ride across and you'd look down at the water as you went across the bridge 'cause it was all open except for those tracks on the crosspieces, you know. (Chuckles)

IH: Okay. Since you lived in Waikīkī since you were small, you must have hung around the beach all the time from when you were young.

WC: Mm hmm [Yes].

IH: So, do you remember any of the old-time beach boys when you first started going down there?

WC: Yeah, I knew 'em all.

IH: Can you tell me about some of them?

WC: Well, let's see.

IH: The ones that were still left there? The real old-timers when you first started going there?

WC: Like "Panama"? "Panama" Dave. He was the biggest chiseler in Waikīkī. He'd invite you to a party, and get up and leave, and leave you with the bill. (Laughs) I've had that happen to me with him.

IH: Oh, no.

WC: Let's see, there was "Panama." "Chick" [Daniels] was one of the beach boys. He was a good one. You know, he worked hard. "Curly" Cornwell. Most of them hustled. They had the captains on the beach that had canoes. And then, they had guys who would hustle the loads. They'd bring the people to the captain, then two of 'em would take 'em out in the canoe and they'd split the proceeds. If it was the Outrigger [Canoe] Club's canoes, then the Outrigger got a portion of it. But they [i.e., the beach boys] got most of it. They got like. . . . Let's see. We used to get a dollar and a half a head, and then they got a dollar, and the club got fifty cents of it per head. We owned all the equipment. See, the Outrigger Club always took care of the hotels as far as the surfing--surfboards, canoes, catamarans. You know, we supplied the beach boys. In the old days, [Louis] "Sally" Hale was one of our beach captains. Gosh, I remember him when I was a kid. Then he retired, and Bill Mullahey took over. Bill Mullahey was head of the Pan Am over here. After he ran the beach, then he got a job with Pan Am and he became head of the South Pacific for Pan American [Airlines].

Then Harry Robello, he was one of the old-time beach boys and probably one of the best and most successful. He still runs the beach. He still controls most of the surfboards and canoes and everything for the Sheraton Hotels. And they pay the Sheraton a percentage of what they make. Fifteen percent it was when I ran it, but I don't know what it is now. It's probably the same. But that's whatever business they generate from the hotels. They'd sign for it. Most of the business is signed, charged to the rooms. And then they collect the paid-outs. That's how you know how much they generated. They have a record of it also. And each month, we'd pay 'em, or weekly, or whatever. Office would take care of that.

And "Menehune." Well, the first, most of the guys I worked with weren't real old-timers, you know. [Samuel] "Steamboat" [Mokuahī] was a fairly old-timer, but . . .

IH: Well, the time you're talking about now, that's when you were down

at the beach running the beach services?

WC: Yeah, I'm talking '63.

IH: In the '60s, right?

WC: You're talking about Maunawai. Maunawai? I knew all those guys, too.

IH: Well, what I was thinking of was when you were just learning.

WC: When I was a kid?

IH: Yeah.

WC: Learning to surf?

IH: Uh huh [Yes], if you remember any of the beach boys down there, at that time.

WC: I can't think of their names. I remember quite a few of 'em. Elmer Lee. Elmer Lee was an old-time beach boy. He was also a musician and he owned the Zanzibar where Keo's is now. The restaurant over there? The [Thai] restaurant, Keo's?

IH: On Kapahulu [Avenue]?

WC: On Kapahulu, yeah. That was Elmer Lee's originally. Elmer L-E-E. He was a musician. And he was also a beach boy. I think he put up one of the first commercial grass shacks in Waikīkī, and he used to sell stuff out of it on the beach right by the club.

IH: Right by the Outrigger Club?

WC: Yeah. Between the Royal [Hawaiian] and the Moana [Hotels].

IH: What kind of things did he sell in there?

WC: Oh, hats, and grass skirts. Things you put on your arm made out of grass skirt stuff. Just junk. All kinds of junk the tourists wanted to buy. Coconuts. Part in the shell and part out, you know. Cut in half and polished. Or coconut rings. You name it. Kukui nut things. You make little rings out of those. They made all kinds of stuff. They used to sell all kinds of things in there. Little dolls, little Hawaiian dolls.

IH: Oh, so is this . . .

WC: I'm talking about the early '30s, you know, '32, '33, '34, around there. He had that shack then. He was selling stuff. There was another shack further down. I forget the name of it. They used to sell lot of stuff.

We got away from the beach boys. I'm trying to think of some of the names. I knew so many of 'em. I knew 'em all. They all knew me. (Chuckles)

IH: Did they know most of the kids?

WC: Oh, yeah, they knew all of us 'cause they always helped us out, you know. They were good guys and wonderful people.

IH: How did they help you out? You mean, teaching you?

WC: Well, if you lost your board and they saw you swimming for your board, they'd bring it back out for you, you know. They'd push it out to you. They'd always help out 'cause they were giving somebody a lesson. Long as you didn't give them a bad time, they were good guys. Let's see. "Panama" was--I mentioned "Panama." There was "Panama," "Chick." One just died recently. You want to turn this off and let me think awhile? Leave it running?

IH: Oh, that's all right. I just thought maybe if you remembered.

WC: Oh, Jimmy Hakuole was another one. He was at Moana [Hotel], then he went to the Royal [Hawaiian Hotel] later on. Hiram Anahu. Hiram, when I was about fourteen, he was the head beach boy at the Moana. They used to have their own beach services.

IH: Did each hotel have their own beach service?

WC: Yeah, more or less. They had their own beach boys that took care of their area. In those days, it was just the Royal and the Moana. Then the Outrigger Club. And we had our own beach boys, too.

IH: So, were there three different beach services, then? Moana, Royal and Outrigger?

WC: No. See, the hotels didn't own the canoes. We owned all the canoes, the Outrigger Club. Some of 'em were owned by "Dad" Center who was an old-timer--he was our coach at the club here. He coached me in 1934, taught me how to paddle. (Chuckles) That's the name you should remember, [George] "Dad" Center. He bought the original three koa racing canoes from Kona and brought 'em down here. We retained two of 'em and one of 'em is [Waikīkī] Surf Club's racing canoe. He bought 'em for \$500 apiece.

IH: When was this?

WC: Around '34--'34, '35. That's when the club then bought two of them, the Leilani and the Kakina from "Dad" Center. And now, those two canoes are insured for \$30,000 apiece. That's how much the value has changed.

IH: And they're still using those canoes?

WC: Oh, yeah. We use the Leilani in the Mokoka'i race. We use it every Sunday. We race it in Moloka'i. We race it on all the distance races. I raced in the Kakina. I used it when I steered the crew, but Duke used the Leilani to race with for the senior crew. I liked the other boat better. It was a little smaller.

IH: Duke Kahanamoku belonged to the Outrigger Club?

WC: Yeah. Yeah, he was a member. I don't remember when he joined. I think he joined just a little before I did. (Chuckles) He joined in about '28 or '30, somewhere around there, '32.

IH: And when did you join?

WC: [Nineteen] thirty-four.

IH: [Nineteen] thirty-four, at twelve years old?

WC: Yeah. Probably before you were born, huh? (Chuckles)

IH: Couple years.

WC: (Chuckles) I've been a member there fifty-two years.

IH: Wow. I didn't know they allowed you to join as children.

WC: Oh, yeah. I was the first one in my family to join. Cost five bucks. It was hard to get five bucks in 1934. (Laughs) I sold a lot of coconuts, mangos and breadfruit. In our yard on Kalākaua Avenue, the one next to the Chinese garden, we had mountain apples, we had breadfruit, we had mangos, we had bananas, we had papayas, we even had avocados. We had every tree imaginable just about in that yard. It was a big yard. That's where I made all my money. That's why I could join the club with five bucks. Those days, a movie was ten cents. (Chuckles) Yeah, I even sold some of the vegetables out of my father's vegetable garden (chuckles) for the restaurant. Had a Filipino boy that used to raise all the vegetables for the restaurant. (Chuckles) I was selling lettuce, I was selling anything I could get my hands on. (Chuckles)

IH: Why did you want to join the Outrigger Club?

WC: I don't know. This is a nice club, and I liked to canoe. I learned to steer a canoe. Well, I learned to paddle a canoe in a Tahitian canoe. I told you to talk to Roy and Wilbur Craw? It belonged to those two boys. They bought 'em in Tahiti when they were down there. They bought this canoe. And they let me use it out in the surf. My brother paddled me all over the ocean out there. That's how I learned to steer a canoe. (Chuckles) Him paddling and me poking [i.e., steering the outrigger]. (Chuckles) That was in the '30s. That was a lot of fun.

IH: What did the Outrigger Canoe Club look like when you first

joined? It was still down in Waikīkī, wasn't it?

WC: Oh, yeah, sure. We were there until. . . . [Nineteen] sixty-four we moved up here. In front on the street on Kalakaua [Avenue], there was a big pavilion with a dance floor up above, second floor. There was a parking area in the front, then the club was in the back. In back of that towards the beach. And it had two volleyball courts, had locker rooms. Of course, they were wood. They were painted green as I remember it. Slant-type roofs. And then, the volleyball courts.

And then, in front of that was a beach pavilion with a small restaurant, Mae's Restaurant. She used to sell us two scoops of rice and gravy for fifteen cents. One scoop for a dime. Two scoops for fifteen cents. Chicken gravy, pork gravy, beef gravy. (Chuckles) She had about four or five different kind of gravies. And that's what we lived on. We come in from surfing and (chuckles) we'd hit Mae's Restaurant for. . . . It was a club thing, but she was the concessionaire, I guess, in those days. It was always rice and gravy. That was it. Mae's rice and gravy for lunch. We grew up on that.

We go play volleyball. And we also had an area there where we had a high jump thing. You know, they had dug a pit where you could pole vault or you could high jump. Lot of sports. Volleyball was the main one.

And canoeing. All the canoes were out on the beach. You saw the book [The Outrigger Canoe Club of Honolulu, Hawai'i], the pictures of the old club? The canoes were all out on the beach, and they kept 'em covered with canvas if you could afford it. If you couldn't afford it, you kept watering it so it didn't crack. I owned a twenty-two foot canoe. I bought one from Charley Amalu when the IRS [Internal Revenue Service] clamped down on him. He owed \$160,000 in taxes and he wanted to liquidate everything before they caught him with the money. (Chuckles) I bought one of his canoes for \$300. It was a beautiful boat. I sold it to John D. Kaupiko. There's one of the old beach boys, John D. Kaupiko. Sold it to him for \$400, and he sold it to somebody for \$600. It wound up in Florida. It was a beautiful canoe. It was a beautiful koa boat.

IH: Was a koa canoe?

WC: Oh, yeah. That's all there was in those days. There was no fiberglass. I bought it for my kids. They didn't want to use it. It sat on the beach.

IH: Did you keep it at the Outrigger Club?

WC: Yeah, I kept it covered.

IH: So, did they house both their own canoes and private canoes?

WC: Yeah. The pavilion, the dining room was upstairs and the bar, and down below was all pull doors. You open 'em. Sliding doors. And they kept all the canoes in there, the ones that would fit in there under cover. You could rent a place to put 'em or if you knew somebody, knew the manager or something, he'd let you leave it free. (Chuckles) But out on the beach, all the big canoes were out there, and they were all covered, sitting on stands. The ones that were thirty, forty feet long. For commercial work, we used koa canoes. They were all koa. They were beautiful boats. They were all taken care of. We had our own carpenters. Jimmy Kaia and another guy that used to build boats. He did a lot of work on our boats.

IH: Didn't the Outrigger Club go through some renovations at that site?

WC: Yeah, they rebuilt it in--I don't remember the years, exactly, but we rebuilt it just before the war, 1940. This guy, [Walter] MacFarlane. He's the one that put all that together. That's Campbell. His mother was Campbell, the Campbell Estate. He was the one that was the main guy in putting together the one in '40 and '41. And then, this one out here, when we moved here, was [John] Cline Mann and Ward Russell. They were instrumental in putting this one together. They were the presidents at the time. Let's see, '60 or '50s, I forget what years. But they were the main men on that, along with Dillingham Corporation and Pacific Construction in building this one.

IH: So when they renovated the one down on Kalākaua, well, down in Waikīkī, how did it change from the original one?

WC: Well, it went from a beach club into more of a social--we began to get into a social atmosphere. You know, because we had a nice dining room and a bar. There were more things, for people that were not athletically inclined, to do. They can come in, and they can sit upstairs. We had a little terrace on one side that they could sit up there and watch the kids surf and the canoes, you know. Watch the canoe races right there when you had breakfast July 4th. Sit up there and watch the races go in and out. It was fabulous. It was a beautiful location, but we were leasing it for \$750 a month. It was \$1,500, but the Matson [Navigation Company's] hotels were paying half of that to keep us there. They paid half of our lease for many years.

IH: Why did they do that?

WC: To keep us there. Something for their guests to do. They'd come. See, our club was more open at that time. They allowed people to pay cash. People would drift in from the hotels. It wasn't as tight a club as it is now. Wasn't as private. You had to be a member, but it was easier to get into, I should say. They allowed people to come in on the Hau Terrace, and drink, and pay cash. I probably shouldn't be saying this. The IRS might get a hold of this. (Chuckles) But that went on.

Then, in nineteen. . . . Well, when we made the decision to move out here, to take this property, our lease was going to \$5,000 a month. And the hotels were not going to help us anymore. So our president at the time, Ward Russell there (WC points to a photo on the wall), said if we don't move, our dues are going to be twenty-five dollars a month. We were paying about \$3.80 a month or something like that. Everybody said, "Twenty-five dollars a month? Horrors, let's move." (Chuckles) And now we're paying fifty-four [dollars]. (Laughs) But we do have a nice place here.

IH: Were there any other clubs that were on the beach? Was Hui Nalu still on the beach at that time?

WC: Hui Nalu used to meet under a tree between the Moana [Hotel] and the Outrigger Club. One little area there, there were some hau trees. They would meet in that area. They didn't have a clubhouse. They operated out of the Moana Bathhouse. See, the Moana Bathhouse was a place where you could change clothes and get those old bathing suits. You know, the one up around the (i.e., the ones with the top connected to the trunks)--it said "Moana Bathhouse" on 'em. But nobody had a clubhouse except us of all the canoe clubs. They all were either over at the [Ala Wai] Canal, you know, where they are now. That's where they were. They've always been there. Except for the Surf Club, Waikiki Surf Club. They got into Steiner's place. And Steiner gave 'em that to use as a clubhouse when they moved. They moved out to Kahala or Black Point. Steiner built a home out there and he gave that [i.e., the Waikiki house] to the Surf Club. I don't know the situation there. You'd have to ask George Downing or one of those guys that was instrumental in that area. But that was the only other (canoe club) that actually had a clubhouse, which was not really a club. They didn't own it, you know. They just kind of used it.

But this is the only true club, canoe club, that there is, that has this [clubhouse], and we paid for it. You know, we've got 3,700 members and everybody pays dues. That's what keeps this thing going. That's why we can go out and buy whatever we want. It doesn't fall out of the sky like some of these canoe paddlers think.

IH: Did the club down on the other side have a big membership also?

WC: Well, not as big as it is now. We had about, oh, gosh. When I joined, I think my number was 400 and something. So, that's all the members we had. When we moved down here, we had about 500 regular members. Now we have about 1,100 regular members. We have 1,000 non-resident members that live on the Mainland. These are mostly local people that have moved, you know, gone here and there. Actually, we have 3,780 members. And everybody's paying dues. That's what supports it. I think our manager is the highest-paid manager in the Islands. I'd hate to tell you what he makes. (Chuckles) He does well.

IH: Okay, when did the club start its beach services down there?

WC: Oh, gosh. In the early '30s.

IH: Yeah, it didn't originally have beach services, did it, originally?

WC: No, no. It just kind of grew on 'em. And our members owned the canoes, the big canoes that they'd use to take people out in.

IH: Even the canoes that Hui Nalu used, that was owned by the Outrigger?

WC: No. No, John D. Kaupiko owned those canoes. "John D." was a very wealthy man. He owns part, a lot, of Kaua'i. He was from the ali'i. Of course, he's passed away now. His son, "John D.," Jr., has quite a bit. Now, [Myron] "Pinky" Thompson runs Hui Nalu [Canoe Club] out at Hawai'i Kai. They moved out there. "Pinky" Thompson does a good job. He's got a lot of money. (Chuckles) He's a trustee at Bishop Estate. So he gets a pretty good chunk every year. You know, in those days, we didn't have that many crews [i.e., canoe clubs]. It's not like now. In those days, there were maybe three or four crews. There were three or four races on a race day, that's all, 'cause that's all the crews you had. (Chuckles) We had senior, junior, in men and women. And then, usually, we had some kind of a novice race. And we had crews in the club. Like we had maybe six crews in this club that would race to see who's going to represent the Outrigger, and my crew always won. (Chuckles)

IH: Oh, so was only one crew?

WC: Only one crew would represent the Outrigger. There'd be Outrigger [Canoe Club], [Waikiki] Surf Club, and Hui Nalu [Canoe Club], and Healani [Canoe Club], I guess. Healani was another one.

IH: How often did they have the races?

WC: Not too often. We used to race in the [Ala Wai] Canal. There were only three crews. You can race in the canal. Now you can't do it 'cause there's about twelve, thirteen crews. It was a little different in those days than it is now. We raced in Honolulu Harbor. My first race was in Honolulu Harbor. I remember it well. We turned over. Right against the pier where all the oil is. (Laughs) We came up black.

IH: Oh, no.

WC: We pushed away from the pier and went shworp. (Laughs) Turned over. But we raced down there. We used to have the. . . . Was Myrtle Boat Club was down in that area?

IH: Mm hmm [Yes].

WC: Yeah. We had the two sister ships called the Ka Mō'i and the

Ho'onaunau, which were big boats. They were very heavy. I can remember they raced in the harbor. The girls' crew from Kona came over here, and our women's crew used the Leilani. They used the Ka Mo'i, which was a surf boat that weighed about 6[00] or 700 pounds. The Leilani weighs about 400. And they smoked us. (Chuckles) They were so big, these wahines from Kona. They raced in the surfing canoe and just kicked our fannies. (Laughs) That was a long time ago. I was a kid then. But what else do you need?

IH: Okay. Let me just turn this.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WC: The biggest boat that there was in Hawai'i was the Princess, and that belonged to Charley Amalu. That wound up on Kaua'i. You might have seen it in the Kaua'i movie. They were using it. Sam Kahanamoku was paddling it away from. . . . Donovan's Reef, I think it was? He paddled away from the sailboat bringing the lady in that they dropped in the water, and she was mad (chuckles). But that was Charley Amalu's boat. That was one of his three boats. I bought one, and I don't know who bought the Princess. But that was a beautiful boat, too. Big one. Oh, then he had the Patches which was a racing canoe. And that, I think Sam got a hold of that, (Duke's) brother. Then it disappeared.

IH: Okay, you said that you were running the Outrigger Club in 1963?

WC: I was running the beach services.

IH: The beach services. Okay, what was included in beach services?

WC: We controlled all the canoes. We had stations. We had a canoe at the Moana [Hotel], we had one at the Outrigger [Canoe Club], and we had one at the Royal Hawaiian [Hotel]. And then, we had two captains at each station. They had hustlers. The other beach boys would go out and hustle loads. They worked with the club. They didn't work for it. Whatever business they generated, that's what they made their money on in the canoes. And then, we had surfing lessons. We had about 100 surfboards on the beach. And we controlled the catamarans. There were two catamarans on the beach. We generated the business for that, too. We got a cut off of each of the (cats). Anybody that went out on the catamaran, we ran that, too. So we controlled the whole beach, actually. And nobody else could come in 'cause, you know, we had the concession from the hotel, the Matson [Navigation Company]. And then the Sheraton hotels, they just kind of followed through.

IH: What was the name of the beach service?

WC: Outrigger.

IH: Outrigger Beach Service . . .

WC: Outrigger Beach Services, yeah. I had twenty-two employees, twenty-two guys working for me. But the real employees were the ones that took care of the surfboards, and raked the beach, set up the umbrellas for our members and guests. So we had a roped-off section in front of the club that belonged to us. We owned from seventy-five feet above the high water mark. We owned that, you know, inside. And we had about sixteen umbrellas out there, and the chairs. We'd set 'em all up for the members and guests. We had nothing to do with the hotel umbrellas or chairs, as far as that went. Just our own little area. But when somebody came down and wanted a surfing lesson or anything like that, they came to us. They were sent to us, and we'd send them out with--they [i.e., the beach boys] had to qualify. They're all lifesavers. They all had to have a lifesaving certificate. And they were allowed to take out so many people. There was a limit as to how many people they could take out. I think it was three or four, something like that. "Rabbit" used to take a bunch of 'em out. He was always asked for. Remember "Rabbit" Kekai.

IH: Mm hmm [Yes]. He's still on the beach.

WC: Yeah, yeah. He's older than I am, you know. Three years older. No matter what he says, he's three years older than I am. You got that?

(Laughter)

WC: I used to kid him, tell him he went to school with my mother.

(Laughter)

IH: Yeah, he's always been on the beach, yeah?

WC: Yeah, he's been a long time. But he's never saved a nickel. And he doesn't drink and he doesn't smoke. I don't know what he does with his money, but it goes. He made a lot of money. He was very popular. People always asked for him. They gave him good tips. He made good money, but he never saved any of it. And I honestly don't know what happened to it. (Chuckles) Maybe he's got it buried somewhere.

Then we rented out the surfboards. I guess there were times when the boards went out five or six, seven times in one day. And that was 100 boards. For the tours, right. They'd all go out. And I think you met [Ah Kin] "Ah Buck" [Yee]. He used to repair the surfboards for me free. And if I had an older type person that wanted a surfing lesson or a young kid, I'd give them to "Ah Buck," 'cause he was the most trustworthy. He was one of the better surfing instructors in the Islands. He was good. I used to take

'em out occasionally myself, but only if they were good-looking young girls.

(Laughter)

WC: Or stewardesses.

(Laughter)

IH: Okay. We can talk about surfing for a little while. When you first started surfing, what were the surfboards like?

WC: They were redwood planks. You'd go down to a store and buy a plank, oh, eight, ten feet long for five dollars. Bring it home and shape it yourself like you wanted it. Varnish it. And then, they'd go out and surf with it. When it hit bottom, it'd crack. So you'd bring it in and you'd make a butterfly patch like that. (WC points to a canoe.) (Chuckles) We got one in the canoe up there. And then, that's how you'd patch it, put your board back together, 'cause they'd split right down the middle. You had to stop the crack with a butterfly. And then, sometimes they'd take these metal things that were like this, and you'd hammer 'em in there (to stop the crack). (Chuckles) For five dollars, you get a junk piece of redwood. For seven dollars, you could get a real nice light piece. They were good, but we never had a skeg. We never had any skegs. Even when, I told you, I had the second hollow board on the beach. It didn't have a skeg either. It was round, kind of a round bottom. It was about eight feet long, I guess. Built like an airplane wing.

IH: Did you make that, too?

WC: No. Johnny Carroll made it for me. He made himself the first one, made me the second one. (Chuckles)

IH: How did you steer if you didn't have a skeg?

WC: Oh, you'd drag your foot. You stand on one foot and drag the other one. Or you'd start your board, when you caught the wave, you'd start it in a slide. Then you stand up, and you could, like they do now, you can lean on it. You can turn it by leaning and drag the back of your heel if you want to turn it this way. Little more touchy in those days than it is now. (Chuckles) You couldn't make all those fancy turns 'cause your board would spin around on you. It'd tail skid. (Chuckles) It was very different.

And then the hollow boards came out. The Tom Blake boards. They were big twelve-foot hollow boards with a big metal ring in the back, so if it got away from you, you could grab it and hang onto it. (Chuckles) It would take you in with it. There might be some of 'em out here [i.e., at the Outrigger Canoe Club], I don't know. I think most of them have disappeared. They were all made of framed wood. They were nice made boards. They were made on the

Mainland.

Then came the balsa-redwood [surfboards]. And they began shaping 'em so there was a little kind of a V in the bottom so they wouldn't tail skid. That was what most of the guys used. [Sam] Colgate was one of the old-time beach boys. There were lot of 'em used those boards for tandem. They'd take people out tandem, put 'em on their shoulders, and bring 'em in. The movie stars, you know. (Chuckles)

Then they came to fiberglass and foam. That's what it is now, foam and fiberglass. It's a different sport now. Anybody can do it. Now they even tie the board to your leg. (Chuckles) You don't lose your board.

IH: So you think it was more difficult before?

WC: Oh, it was much more difficult, yeah. But we could ride our boards backwards or forwards, it didn't make any difference. It was flat on the bottom anyway. (Laughs) There was no skeg. We surfed like that. The first time I ever went out, I was about six or seven years old and I went out on the First Break waves with a guy, tandem. This guy took me out. Never forget it. (Chuckles) I was scared to death. (Chuckles)

IH: "First Break," that's where?

WC: Way outside.

IH: Oh, boy.

WC: The waves were about ten feet high, I guess.

IH: And you were only six or seven years old?

WC: Yeah, but I could swim. I'm trying to think of the guy's name that took me out. Johnny. . . . The guy that does all the rescues out on the other side of the island. He used to. He drove a jeep. Airdale McPherson. His brother took me out. I don't remember his name. But Airdale, he was an old-time beach guy. Policeman, fireman, or whatever. (Chuckles) Both, I think. He used to rescue people out on the North Shore.

IH: What changes on the beach do you think have been major effects on the beach? Beach activities, and things like that?

WC: I think the influx of people has taken away your beach boys. You don't have the same. . . . It's so different now. It's all commercial. Everything's commercial.

IH: Are the beach boys different today than they used to be?

WC: Yeah, yeah. The beach boys are much different.

IH: How would you say they're different?

WC: Well, in our days, they didn't drink. There was no such thing as dope in those days, which there's quite a bit of now. I don't know. I see it on the beach. I see different people staggering around. (Chuckles) But the boys that we had were not like that. They were all clean-cut guys. They liked to drink a few beers and they'd get in a fight once in a while, but they weren't like the ones I see now. I didn't have the problems they have now, I should say that. And they get so many tourists now that you have no room to do anything on the beach. You know, the beach is wall-to-wall bodies. There's not the flavor or I don't know what you want to call it. There's no space. You can't stretch out. (Chuckles) That's gone.

IH: Yeah. Okay. Now, you got married in 1944. So, at that time, you were living on Lewers [Road]?

WC: Yeah.

IH: Did you stay there?

WC: Well, we stayed there for a while, couple of years.

IH: And then, where'd you move to?

WC: Then I moved up to Nu'uano. Just below Queen Emma home. You know, the Queen Emma museum up there? We were just below that.

IH: The summer palace?

WC: Yeah. Just below that. I lived up there for about three years, I guess, in the rain. (Chuckles)

IH: Gee, that's the first time you lived away from the beach, then, really.

WC: Yeah.

IH: Did you still come down to Waikīkī?

WC: Oh, yeah. I belonged to the [Outrigger Canoe] Club all the time. Came down every day, twice a day. My kids grew up in this club just like I did.

IH: Are they members also?

WC: They were, but they can't afford it now. So they quit. It's too expensive. You take a fella that's making \$1,000 a month, and he's got a family, he can't afford to throw away fifty-four dollars a month for dues, you know. And, let's say he's going to use the club, it's going to cost him \$2[00] or \$300 a month. You just can't do it. So they all quit, little by little. One son should

have stayed, but he didn't. He works at Pearl Harbor. My oldest boy. But they surf. They still play volleyball. They do it elsewhere where it's free. Fort DeRussy, or somewhere else. They don't come down here too much anymore, which I'm sorry to say. (Chuckles) I wish they did.

IH: Did you ever live in Waikīkī again after that?

WC: No, I lived in Wai'alae-Kāhala. I built a couple of houses out there, and I had one on Kāhala Avenue.

IH: But you never came back to Waikīkī?

WC: No, I never lived in Waikīkī. Well, yeah. I lived in the Rosalei Apartments for about six years, I guess. That's in Waikīkī. (Chuckles) But I never used the beach much over there. I always came down here. You know, I didn't go back to the beach too much. And then, my work took me away from there.

IH: What was your occupation at that time?

WC: I was in the used car business for quite a few years. Then I got in the taxi business. I've been in that for about eighteen years. The last six years I lived there, I was in the taxi business.

IH: And that's in Waikīkī only, your taxi service?

WC: Yeah. Moana, Surfrider, and Princess Ka'iulani. (Chuckles) Three hotels.

IH: So you've been connected with the hotels for . . .

WC: Long time, yeah.

IH: You were with the Outrigger [Canoe Club], and then now with your taxi service. Did that help to get you the service with the hotel?

WC: No. But I know 'em all now. I've known 'em all for years. Well, I guess it would help. I knew Jimmy Cockett. He's there. He's an old-timer. He was a cop before, motorcycle. He was manager of the Moana Surfrider [Hotel] then, now he's manager of the Princess Ka'iulani [Hotel].

But I don't think I'll ever live in Waikīkī again. It's too crowded. Too expensive. I like to get out of there once in a while, get away from those (chuckles) people. I'll always come to the club. I don't think I'll ever want to live there again. There's nothing left there. It's all changed. All concrete.

IH: But you're still working there.

WC: Yeah. I don't know how much longer.

(Laughter)

WC: I enjoy it. We only cater to tourists. We don't take outside loads too much. Just take the tourists around.

IH: How are today's tourists as compared to before?

WC: Very different. The old days, the people came by boat. They had a lot of money. Now, they're coming, they don't have anything. They got a coupon for almost everything they do, and if they don't have a coupon, they don't do it. (Chuckles) It's true. Gosh, I picked up some people the other day, they said, "Ho, we gotta get back. We're going to miss our lunch at Perry's Smorgasbord." You know, they get a free lunch there at Smorgasbord. They're from Oklahoma and got lot of money, and yet they're going to Smorgasbord for lunch, four of 'em actually. Lady and her three kids. I mean, that's the kind of tourist we're getting now. They don't have any money. If they do, they don't spend it.

IH: But in the olden days, they spent their money more?

WC: Well, they had more money to spend. Now, gosh, people walk. They walk everywhere. Maybe the doctors are telling them to do that. But the biggest food business right now is Burger King, MacDonald's, Jack-in-the-Box. All the fast food things in Waikīkī, they're loaded. You go to the upper middle-class restaurants in Waikīkī, there's nobody in 'em. You don't even need to make a reservation except for maybe two or three of 'em. You can just walk right in and sit down. There're plenty of tables. The people don't have the money.

They love to come to the club here if they have reciprocity. See, we're reciprocal with a lot of clubs on the Mainland. So they get guest cards. By the same token, we can use their facilities when we go up there. But our food here and drinks are very inexpensive, compared to the hotels. You know, you go into a hotel, and you pay \$3.50 for a beer. Over here, you pay a buck eighty [\$1.80] for the same beer. I'm talking about Beck's or Heineken's or one of those. But Budweiser, you pay \$2.50 at the Moana [Hotel]. And the meals are very expensive. People just, I guess, they can't afford it. It's hurt our business. The last six years, my business has just gone downhill steady. And my insurance has gone the other way. Triple.

IH: So when you first started the business, it was much better than it is now?

WC: Oh, yeah. Much better.

IH: But yet, we have a lot more tourists now.

WC: Yeah. But they don't spend any money. Right now, our hotels are full of kids. They get some kind of a package deal for kids that

just graduated from high school. And they're seventeen, eighteen years old. And they don't do anything except run around. You see 'em running back upstairs with their bag of hamburgers or whatever, and a couple bottles of beer that somebody's bought 'em. They take 'em back upstairs. Maybe they're only seventeen. But that's what it is. If you go down and look, you'd be amazed. And then, you see the security guards running around, crazy. And the cops over there, busting up some party of thirty people in one room or something, you know. It's just unbelievable.

(Laughter)

WC: And this is going to go on until the end of August. Yeah. At our hotels. Now, the Reef Hotel won't even let 'em in. They used to get 'em all. Now, they kicked them out. They don't want these kids anymore, these tours.

IH: But the winter crowd is much different?

WC: The winter crowd is a little better, yeah. But you can go broke waiting for them. Especially this year, the insurance is going to be between \$1,700 and \$2,000 per car for each driver. That's a lot of money. If you don't have any points. If you have points, then you're looking at \$3,000. If you have a DUI [driving under the influence of alcohol], you're looking for \$6,000. Work in a parking lot or something.

(Laughter)

WC: So you don't have to drive outside. But it's--I don't know. I think Waikīkī, the good people--I don't say the good people, there are good people that come to Waikīkī--but the affluent people are not coming here anymore. They're going right through to Maui and Kaua'i and the resort areas in Hawai'i. They're just not coming here. I don't see the old people that I've seen for the last fifteen, sixteen years. They don't come back. They've gone on to better areas. And they're still coming here. Once in a while, they'll come through. They'll stay one day in the hotel, and they say, "How can you stand this." (Laughs) This rat race, you know. The mopeds and the three-wheel--what do you call those?

IH: Pedicabs?

WC: Pedicabs, ho. Driving around, saying, "You want to buy some buds?" It's just terrible. Waikīkī is a garbage hole now. They're trying to clean it up, I guess, but it was never like that before. Nobody ever came out and hustled you on the street. They ruined Waikīkī. And they've allowed it to happen. I blame the government. They haven't stopped them. The hookers are out in the middle of the street now. You know, they're right in front of our hotels, hustling the Japanese away from their wives, the guys. Yeah, I've seen 'em do it. Go right up to 'em and hustle 'em. Just unbelievable. I'm ashamed to take people to Waikīkī, friends of

mine, that are coming here. That's what I think. I bring 'em right down here to the club, get 'em out of Waikīkī. Let 'em sit out here and look back and say, "Isn't that pretty? All that concrete." (Chuckles) It's too bad. Progress, they call it. And it's progressively getting worse.

(Laughter)

WC: That's the way it is. End of interview. Thank you very much.

(Laughter)

IH: Okay. I think that's all I have.

WC: You don't believe me, just meet me down there some night and I'll show you the whole thing. (Laughs)

END OF INTERVIEW

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